

VZCZCXRO4103
OO RUEHMR
DE RUEHKI #0698 1241302
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 041302Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3801
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 000698

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/04/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [CG](#)
SUBJECT: ANGRY CITIZENS WANT ACTION AGAINST FDLR

REF: KINSHASA 697

Classified By: A/DCM MSanderson, reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. (C) The airport in Bukavu was temporarily closed May 3 when about 500 residents of the town staged a demonstration on the road leading to the airport to protest perceived lack of action by either the Congolese military (FARDC) or the U.N. peacekeeping force (MONUC) against the FDLR, whose continuing actions have claimed scores of Congolese lives in the province. MONUC officials confirm the airport is open and functioning normally now, and was only closed as a preventive measure yesterday.

¶2. (C) A/DCM spoke to South Kivu Vice-Governor Thomas Nziratimana May 3, who said that the Governor has recently received several petitions from citizen groups demanding action against the FDLR and threatening to "take matters into our own hands" if the government and/or MONUC will not act. (Note: MONUC Bukavu has received similar documents. End Note.) Nziratimana said that the mounting public frustration -- and indeed, hostility -- is perfectly understandable in light of the years of violence suffered by civilians in the province at the hands of the FDLR. Nziratimana noted that extensive publicity following last year's San Egidio negotiations with the FDLR led to misplaced optimism that at last the problem would be ended. He added that reports stemming from a recent meeting of the Tripartite Plus in Burundi implying that no action against the FDLR is imminent, together with an upsurge in FDLR attacks, have helped re-ignite public resentment.

¶3. (C) Comment: For at least the last six months the Embassy has been monitoring the buildup of frustration and its potential consequences. During visits to Bukavu, for instance, PolCouns has been told by civil society and religious groups that small villages are beginning to organize their own militias to defend themselves from FDLR attacks. Late last year, the head of the Mai Mai political element in South Kivu called on his "troops" to do their utmost to attack the FDLR and drive them from the province. While the latter development might seem potentially useful, the reality is that, as demonstrated by the May 3 episode, there is a mounting risk of widespread civil unrest which could actually further exacerbate the already precarious security situation in the province. Absent a sustained Congolese military push against the FDLR there is a very real, and growing, risk of widespread violence. End comment.
DOUGHERTY